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conclusion is, "it seems idle to discuss further the influence of forests upon rain-fall from the economic point of view, as it is evidently too slight to be of the least practical importance. Man has not yet invented a method of controlling rain-fall."

Frederick Brendel has distributed a pamphlet of about ninety pages, entitled "Flora Peoriana." It is a careful and painstaking presentation of the observations of thirty-five years upon the vegetation of a small area in middle Illinois. It is intended to show how local floras should be treated to be useful to phytogeography; how notice should be taken of soil and climate, to understand the vegetation of a certain floral district. It is packed full of useful information, and would serve as a guide to similar observations elsewhere.

Formation of starch by plants has been the subject of experiments recently conducted by Professors Ivey and Gray at the School of Agriculture, Canterbury, New Zealand. Peas, beans and wheat were used, and up to date the following results have been obtained, as given in *Gardener's Chronicle* (January 7): "Starch is least plentiful in leaves collected in early morning, more plentiful in those collected late in the afternoon, but before evening. The degree of sunshine has a direct effect on the rate of starch-formation; in continuous cloudy weather starch is formed by plants but very slowly."

"Contributions to the life-histories of plants" is the title of a paper distributed by Mr. Thomas Meehan, a reprint from the *Proc. Philad. Acad.* It consists of observations of various kinds upon various plants. Amphicarpæa monoica is observed to have apetalous flowers upon the climbing as well as the trailing stems; these flowers produce a third form of pod, and are fertilized from the petal-bearing flowers. Cephalanthus occidentalis is shown to be close-fertilized by the rapid development of the style sweeping the pollen out of the anthers, after the manner of the Compositæ. In Amorpha canescens it is observed that the vexillum is remarkably tardy in development, in fact attaining its size and attractiveness after fertilization has been effected. In Oxybaphus hirsutus, also, nothing suggests any arrangements for cross-fertilization.

Professor Pierre Viala sailed for Europe on December 3, after a stay of some months in this country. One of the objects of his mission was to see if there was any species of Vitis growing wild in the United States on soils corresponding to the calcareous (chalk) soils of central France. He traveled through the southern United States making special study of grape culture in California and Missouri. In Texas he gathered some interesting facts about the native species of Vitis, one species of which is likely to prove useful in France. Some forms of viticolous fungi were recognized not before recorded for the United States. He returned feeling that he had been most happily successful in the accomplishment of the purposes of his visit. His report will probably appear in France and in this country at about the same date, and will be a work of special interest to American viticulturists.

Errata.—On page 5, foot-note. for "1877" read 1887. On page 9, third and fifth lines from bottom: for "Gothic shaped" read L-shaped.